



Halloween Fire Safety

In this country more than 100 people die each year as a result of their clothes catching on fire. Decorations for special events and holidays, usually involving candles, result in an average of 800 home fires each year. These fires cause nearly \$4,000,000 in property damage each year. That is why although Halloween should be a time of fun and celebration, children need to be closely supervised and their costumes should be chosen with fire safety in mind. The Madison Fire Department suggests you follow these safety tips to have a fire safe Halloween this year:

COSTUMES

Buy only costumes labeled as flame resistant or flame retardant. If making a costume, plan it carefully to make sure it won't easily catch on fire if it comes into contact with flames or heat. Don't use fabrics that are highly flammable and avoid designs that feature billowing or long trailing features, these have a higher chance of accidentally catching on fire.

If trick-or-treating at night is planned, costumes should be of bright colors to improve their visibility.

PARTY DECORATIONS

When planning your Halloween decorations, remember that dried cornstalks are highly combustible. Keep decorations well away from heat sources such as light bulbs and heaters. Don't use candles in your decorations! Jack-O-Lanterns can be safely illuminated with flashlights instead of candles or oil lamps. When putting up your scary Halloween decorations, don't block or hide exits.

OTHER PRECAUTIONS

Tell children to stay away from open flames and other heat sources and be sure that they know the Stop, Drop and Roll method in case their costumes catch on fire in spite of all precautions. Remind children attending Halloween parties at other people's homes to locate the exits and plan how they would get out in case of a fire. Finally, provide children with lightweight flashlights to carry for lighting or as part of their costumes instead of candles or oil lamps.

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